

## IMI2 JU INDEPENDENT OBSERVERS' REPORT

**Call ID: H2020-JTI-IMI2-2017- single-stage**

**IMI-2 11<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals**

**Exploitation of IMI Project Results**

**Date of evaluation:**

**28<sup>th</sup> November – 29<sup>th</sup> November**

**Number of pages in this report (title page included): 4**

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**Present at the evaluation: 28<sup>th</sup> November – 29<sup>th</sup> November**

## 1. Introduction and approach taken by the observer

This report describes the evaluation of two independent observers whose role was to assess and report on the practical workings of the evaluation process, the conduct and fairness of the evaluation session, the application of scoring criteria and the procedures and their implementation. The modus operandi of the observers is detailed below:

- A telephone pre-briefing from the IMI office was provided the week before the panel, summarising the strategic concept of the IMI call for funding, its current stage of evolution, the procedures of the evaluation process and recommendations for conducting the evaluation process by the observers.
- The panel was convened for a two-day period allocated to assessment of the proposals. All expert panel members and both observers attended a pre-briefing presentation by the IMI directorate, which provided background on IMI and the processes for the panel assessments.
- Both observers were provided with a hard copy of the applicant proposals and the expert panel comments, which formed the basis for discussions towards reaching consensus on scoring of the proposals and submission of the reports.
- The observers were also provided with a dedicated room for reviewing the proposals and for confidential discussions.
- There was one panel for evaluation of the proposals by 10 panel members and the observers shared attendance throughout the two days. Both observers saw the operation of the panel at various points during the evaluation process, i.e. panel discussions, agreement of scores and preparation of consensus reports.

Both observers informally discussed the panel procedures with several expert panel members and with the panel moderator, during coffee and lunch breaks.

## 2. Overall impression

All panel members adhered to the procedures published in the IMI guidance literature, primarily the IMI2 Manual for Submission, Evaluation, and Grant Signature and were well guided by the IMI scientific officer. The evaluation process was expertly implemented and the IMI staff member moderated the meeting with excellent input and efficiency.

The independent experts were very well suited for the complexity of the project proposals and balanced in terms of gender. Discussions among panel members were extremely fair and fruitful, with the moderator ensuring focused discussion on relevant matters to the evaluation. The discussion of each proposal did lead to some changes in the pre-meeting evaluation scores during with the process of reaching a consensus, as fully justified and expected from such panel meetings.

The rapporteurs assigned to each proposal were well selected for their role in terms of their background and breadth of expertise. They had been requested to produce a document

summarising the experts' comments prior to the meeting, to be utilised for facilitating the subsequent preparation of the consensus report, which was in full accordance with the final scores given to the proposals.

The panel operated with complete transparency to reach a consensus and fully collaborated in preparing the consensus reports.

### **3. Specific comments**

The pre-meeting telephone briefing by the IMI team was useful, attempts of the observers to watch the IMI2 Webinar were met with technical difficulties, as was the access to evaluation summaries of individual panel members. The observers would have benefited from basic training and guidance in the use of the SEP portal, during or immediately following the telephone briefing.

On occasions the observers found it difficult to find an empty seat in the meeting room and would have benefited from a pre-allotted seating place.

In spite of the limited number of proposals, the time allotted for remote evaluations and for panel meeting discussions was generous and well justified as compared to current practice in most grant awarding bodies evaluating proposals requesting an equivalent amount of resources.

The infrastructure provided for the evaluators was excellent in terms of meeting rooms and additional tools such as storage cubicles and meeting room power cubes, although a supply of international adaptors would have been useful. The facilities provided for drink and food, i.e., the coffee corner and canteen, were excellent.

The administrative support from the IMI team was excellent throughout the complete panel process, greatly facilitating our task.

### **4. Summary of recommendations**

1. Support and training on use of the SEP portal to remotely view the proposals and evaluators' reports, should be provided to the observers during or immediately after the pre-meeting call.  
submission of abstracts of topic proposals to the observers, would be extremely helpful.
2. An allocated seat with "Independent Observer" tag should be issued for each meeting room, consisting of the topic-specific documentation (call topic summary, proposal abstracts, remote evaluation summaries), should be provided.